Ideal PhD timeline

The processes reflected here are *ideal* but not standard. Some students may move through some stages more quickly; some students may move through some stages more slowly. When you have your first meeting with a student as chair/member of the guidance committee, you should map *their* ideal timelines for finishing the program as a *guideline* for the next few years. Things will change, of course, and you'll adjust the timeline. The important thing is that a student's map for finishing the program does not exceed their guaranteed funding package (4 or 5 years).

YEAR ONE

ACTIVITIES	DELIVERABLES (student)	DELIVERABLES (chair)
• be advised by program director	personal calendar	
• enrolled in WRA 885	work management plan	
• complete Responsible Code of Research (RCR) year 1 requirements (in part in WRA 885)	CITI completion verification sent to Melissa	
• take core coursework (plus any concentration course not being offered every year)		
• form guidance committee		RoGC signed and filed by April 15
• produce annual review and plan for year two	annual portfolio	Annual Report Form B filed by April 15
• establish GradPlan		

YEAR TWO

ACTIVITIES	DELIVERABLES (student)	DELIVERABLES (chair)
• regularly touch base with guidance committee chair (monthly-ish, more frequently as exam approaches)		
• take core and concentration courses		
• find a writing group and tweak work management plan	updated work management plan	
• complete RCR year 2 requirements	CITI completion verification sent to Melissa	
• core exam preparation starts by mid-spring semester, with exam completed by June	draft core questions, initially workshopped with chair and then shared with entire committee for final approval; eventually, core portfolio and essays	core exam portion of Examination Record signed and delivered to Melissa
NOTE: Except in rare cases, we do not advise that students take their core exam before the spring semester of their second year. Taking the core exam early prohibits students from generously spending time in and deeply reflecting on their time in the core of their PhD program.		

• annual review portfolio can be waived (core portfolio substitutes) but advise a meeting with committee touch base		Annual Report Form B filed by April 15
• concentration exam preparation might begin immediately after the core exam is taken so student can read/write over the summer	draft prompt and draft bib, initially workshopped with chair and then shared with entire committee for approval	

YEAR THREE

ACTIVITIES	DELIVERABLES (student)	DELIVERABLES (chair)
• regularly touch base with guidance committee chair (every 3–4 weeks, more frequently as prospectus and dissertation work begin)	updated work management plan	
• complete RCR year 3 requirements	CITI completion verification sent to Melissa	
• concentration exam completed by October (September is ideal)	concentration portfolio, lit review essay, and annotated bib	concentration exam portion of Examination Record signed and delivered to Melissa
• begin drafting dissertation prospectus		chair should expect to help with scope and calendar
• defend dissertation prospectus by December/January (October is ideal)		prospectus portion of Examination Record signed and delivered to Melissa
• dissertation research and writing—chair should meet with the student frequently, advising during "data" collection and analysis, providing support and accountability (deadlines) for drafting/writing as well as mentoring support for the process of working on a large project	draft materials, updated diss calendar, etc.	
• annual review portfolio can be waived but committee should touch base with the student		Annual Report Form B filed by April 15
• students with 4-year funding will begin the job placement workshop in late spring of this year		they will be told they need TWO completed analysis chapters of their dissertation by August 30

YEAR FOUR *for students with 4-year funding*

ACTIVITIES	DELIVERABLES (student)	DELIVERABLES (chair)
• job seeking	draft letter of application, updated CV, teaching philosophy statement, teaching portfolio, research statement, administrative statement (if applicable)	chair AND committee deliverables: letters of recommendation

• complete RCR year 4 requirements	CITI completion verification sent to Melissa	
• dissertation research and writing	draft chapters	chair provides regular support (every 2–3 weeks) and accountability during this time
• defend the dissertation	defense-ready dissertation	dissertation defense form signed by entire committee and delivered to Melissa immediately after the defense
• file the dissertation and graduate	final edits, revisions, changes, etc.	

YEAR FOUR *for students with 5-year funding*

ACTIVITIES	DELIVERABLES (student)	DELIVERABLES (chair)
• complete RCR year 4 requirements	CITI completion verification sent to Melissa	
• dissertation research and writing	draft chunks and pieces	chair provides regular support (every 2–3 weeks) and accountability during this time
• annual review portfolio can be waived BUT committee should touch base with the student		Annual Report Form B filed by April 15
• students with 5-year funding will begin the job placement workshop in late spring of this year		they will be told they need TWO completed analysis chapters of their dissertation by August 30

YEAR FIVE *for students with 5-year funding*

ACTIVITIES	DELIVERABLES (student)	DELIVERABLES (chair)
• job seeking	draft letter of application, updated CV, teaching philosophy statement, teaching portfolio, research statement, administrative statement (if applicable)	chair AND committee deliverables: letters of recommendation
• complete RCR year 5 requirements	CITI completion verification sent to Melissa	
• dissertation writing	draft chapters	chair provides regular support (every 2–3 weeks) and accountability during this time
• defend the dissertation	defense-ready dissertation	dissertation defense form signed by entire committee and delivered to Melissa immediately after the defense

• file the dissertation and graduate	final edits, revisions, changes, etc.	

Important University Deadlines:

A student *must* complete their comprehensive exams (core, concentration, prospectus) within 5 years of the first semester they enter the program.

A student *must* complete (and file) their dissertation within 8 years of the first semester they entered the program.